

## CHAPTER 318

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**EDUCATION - POSTSECONDARY**

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**SENATE BILL 21-232**

BY SENATOR(S) Zenzinger and Kirkmeyer, Bridges, Buckner, Danielson, Donovan, Fenberg, Fields, Ginal, Gonzales, Holbert, Jaquez Lewis, Lee, Moreno, Pettersen, Priola, Sonnenberg, Story, Winter, Garcia;  
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Kipp and Bird, Amabile, Bernett, Boesenecker, Duran, Esgar, Exum, Gonzales-Gutierrez, Gray, Herod, Hooton, Jackson, Jodeh, Lontine, McCluskie, McCormick, McLachlan, Michaelson Jenet, Ortiz, Roberts, Sirota, Titone, Valdez A., Weissman, Woodrow.

**AN ACT****CONCERNING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE COLORADO OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE'S DISPLACED WORKERS GRANT.**

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

**SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly finds that:

(a) Pursuant to the federal "American Rescue Plan Act of 2021", Pub.L. 117-2, as the act may be subsequently amended, Colorado will receive \$3,828,761,790 to be used for certain eligible uses. Federal regulations providing guidance regarding eligible uses of money allocated pursuant to the act include:

(I) Assistance to unemployed workers, including job training for individuals who want and are available for work;

(II) Aid to impacted industries to respond to the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

(III) Programs, services, or other assistance for populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency, such as programs or services that address or mitigate the impacts of the public health emergency on education;

(b) In 2020, the Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative responded to needs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic by creating the displaced workers grant. The displaced workers grant supports Coloradans displaced by the COVID-19 pandemic, including those who were laid off or furloughed, experienced decreased

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*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.*

earnings, had job offers rescinded, or were unable to enter the workforce because of negative economic conditions. These workers have an incentive to reskill, upskill, or complete industry-recognized credentials in order to improve economic prospects for themselves and their communities.

(c) Appropriating a portion of the money received pursuant to the federal "American Rescue Plan Act of 2021", Pub.L. 117-2, as the act may be subsequently amended, to the Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative is estimated to serve at least three thousand displaced Colorado workers and will provide these workers with the skills, supports, and credentials necessary to secure good jobs, sustain a resilient state economy, and help institutions of higher education scale high-demand and highly impacted programs; and

(d) These funds will be distributed to public institutions of higher education, community partners, and workforce centers across the state to provide scholarships, wraparound supports, and recruitment and retention efforts for Coloradans with some college education but no degree who have the need to reskill, upskill, or complete industry-recognized credentials due to lost or reduced employment.

(2) The general assembly declares that appropriating a portion of the money received pursuant to the federal "American Rescue Plan Act of 2021", Pub.L. 117-2, as the act may be subsequently amended, to the Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative for such purposes described in this section are appropriate and lawful.

**SECTION 2. Appropriation.** (1) For the 2020-21 state fiscal year, \$15,000,000 is appropriated to the department of higher education for use by the Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative advisory board. This appropriation is from the workers, employers, and workforce centers cash fund created in section 24-75-231 (2)(a), C.R.S., and from money the state received from the federal coronavirus state fiscal recovery fund. The Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative advisory board may use this appropriation for the Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative's displaced workers grant. Any money appropriated in this section not expended prior to July 1, 2021, is further appropriated to the Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative advisory board for the 2021-22 state fiscal year for the same purpose.

(2) For the 2020-21 state fiscal year, \$15,000,000 is appropriated to the workers, employers, and workforce centers cash fund created in section 24-75-231 (2)(a), C.R.S. This appropriation is from the general fund. The department of personnel and administration is responsible for the accounting related to this appropriation.

**SECTION 3. Effective date.** This act takes effect only if section 4 of House Bill 21-1264 becomes law, and, in which case, this act takes effect upon the effective date of this act or one day after the effective date of section 4 of House Bill 21-1264, whichever is later.

**SECTION 4. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.

Approved: June 24, 2021